

enviable record in the United States Air Force.

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments of the gentleman from Utah.

Mr. Speaker, this bill does extend the authorization for the establishment of an Air Force memorial. It is the only service that does not have one, and I think it is long overdue.

The Air Force Memorial Foundation has worked tirelessly for over 7 years toward that goal, and historically all memorials authorized by Congress have required extensions to their legislation. In fact, this only authorizes 5 additional years for the Air Force memorial, which is going to be built without taxpayer dollars.

It does not reference a specific site, and construction is subject to final approval from the National Capital Planning Commission and the Commission on Fine Arts. I think it is time to properly honor our Air Force Members who fought to keep America free.

Do you remember World War II veterans? I do. Those guys were called America's greatest society, its greatest generation. It is the guys who flew those early airplanes, those P-40s in China, the P-51s in Europe, the B-17s, the B-24s, the B-25s, the B-26s, the Air Force that got us on track after World War II; and it is your Air Force today that did the things in the Middle East and in Kosovo that made America great and has kept it there throughout the years.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is only proper that we honor our Air Force members who fought and have fought and will continue to fight to keep America free. Please vote to give America's pilots the honor they so deserve.

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS).

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation, and I commend the gentleman from Utah (Chairman HANSEN) for his leadership on this issue.

The bill, of course, as mentioned earlier, authorizes the Air Force Memorial Foundation for an additional 5 years to accomplish its mission. Frankly, it is a mission that is long overdue. I think it has been pointed out, the Air Force is the only branch of America's Armed Forces without a memorial in the Nation's Capital. Could this be? The time has come for this city to dedicate a memorial in honor of the commitment and sacrifice of the men and women of the United States Air Force, and I think it is long overdue.

It will not only honor the millions of patriotic men and women who have distinguished themselves in the United States Air Force, but its predecessors, such as the Army Air Corps, which we should also remember.

The memorial will also salute the vast technological achievements that

have been made by the Air Force, which has made it the most formidable air power in the world. This has had a profound impact on the transformation of this entire world over the last century.

From biplanes to the B-2 Stealth Bomber, the Air Force has evolved from a fledgling aeronautical division of the United States Signal Corps to a powerful 21st century expeditionary aerospace force.

So we are beholden to honor the aviation pioneers of yesterday, the technological achievements of today, and the distinguished service of those men and women in blue.

Mr. Speaker, Americans deserve to learn about Captain Eddie Rickenbacker. I do not know if a lot of people know about him today, but he would be recognized, the first U.S. trained ace pilot; Colonel Billy Mitchell, who was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his foresight in aviation; General Hap Arnold, the architect of U.S. air power; Captain Chuck Yeager, the first man to break the sound barrier; the Tuskegee Airmen, African American pilots and personnel of the 332nd Fighter Group, which earned a Distinguished Unit Citation for an escort mission to Berlin in 1945; the Women's Auxiliary Corps in World War II, which included women pilots; and the Air Force's first graduated female pilot class of 1977. These are the things that Americans should know about and that this memorial would point out.

As with other armed service memorials, the Air Force Memorial would not only honor those who have served and those who continue to serve, but I think in the end it would inspire future generations to serve this country with pride.

I urge the adoption of this legislation.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce my enthusiastic support for HR 4583, a measure that should have broad bipartisan support. This is one of many legislative initiatives that should be supported by those who honor those who sacrificed so much for their nation.

In December 1993, President Clinton signed legislation (PL 103-165) authorizing the Air Force Memorial to establish an Air Force Memorial in the District of Columbia or its environs. However, under the Commemorative Works Act, legislative authority for a commemorative work expires after seven years if no construction permits have been issued. Due to legal delays, no such permits have been issued, although all pending lawsuits have been resolved and work is ready to commence. We cannot allow this work to be left unfinished.

Mr. Speaker, this bill has a simple purpose. It extends to December 2, 2005, the authorization for the Air Force Memorial Foundation to establish a memorial in the District of Columbia. It simply authorizes the necessary funds to make the memorial a reality—a goal we all share. This is something that all Americans would benefit from as tourists or residents of the remarkable location known as the District of Columbia.

Like some of my colleagues, I have worked to ensure that our veterans are recognized and commended for their contributions. Our veterans deserve our strong support because they have shown honor, humility, and human decency that is unparalleled. That is why I was so honored and excited to sponsor legislation recognizing the efforts and sacrifices of those veterans who either served or fought during World War II.

The joint resolution (H.J. Resolution 98) designates May 25, 2000, as a national Day of Honor to honor minority veterans from World War II. An identical resolution—S.J. Resolution 44—as introduced by my colleague U.S. Senator EDWARD KENNEDY. It was wonderful to see the excitement shared by veterans around the nation when President Clinton signed the legislation into law in the Oval Office in May. The resolution calls upon communities across the nation to participate in celebrations to honor minority veterans on May 25, 2000, and throughout the year 2000.

I have learned that these celebrations have continued all over the country in several cities since the legislation became law. Over one hundred and twenty cities across America have held or are planning to hold a Day of Honor observance. The number increases weekly.

Because this recognition is long overdue, it is appropriate that we honor and celebrate the memories of the veterans who served or fought throughout the year. The Day of Honor celebrations are a part of a number of initiatives to honor our veterans. Today, we have an opportunity to extend our continued appreciation to a large segment of veterans from the Air Force that make us all so proud to be Americans.

Establishing an Air Force Memorial in the District of Columbia is entirely beneficial to the entire nation and needs our strong continued support to make sure that the job is well done. For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to vote for HR 4583. This is the very least we must do for our veterans.

Mr. ROMERO-BARCELO. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. HANSEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4583.

The question was taken.

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 1117, H.R. 4957, H.R. 3632, as amended, and H.R. 4583.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Utah?